



### **Quick list of common violations.**

- House numbers are required by code for premises identification. They must be visible.
- Hallways and corridors are to be free of obstructions. Bicycles, tables, planters, toys and such are not to be stored in an exit way. Look for a clear unobstructed path from the apartment to the public sidewalk.
- Walking surfaces such as sidewalks, decks, patios, driveways and slabs need to be kept in a proper state of repair and free of hazardous conditions.
- If you notice abandoned, unlicensed or inoperative vehicles on the property the codes dept. can set them up for towing.
- In an apartment building the entry door and jamb to the apartment should not be damaged and should be secure. These doors and jambs typically are fire rated and are an important safety feature.
- Stairs, guardrails and handrail construction and maintenance are very important for tenant and guest safety. A few of the most common problems:
  - a.) handrails are required when four or more stair risers are present.
  - b.) guardrails are required for raised surfaces (porches, balconies etc.) 30 inches above grade or floors.
  - c.) stairs are generally 36 inches wide at a minimum.
  - d.) the rise of each tread in a stairs should not vary more than 3/8 inch.
  - e.) all parts of a stair, porch, or balcony should be maintained structurally sound.
  - f.) stair headroom should be 6' 8" from tread nosing.
  - g.) guard rails are generally 36" in height.
  - h.) a 7" rise and 11" run are minimums for stairs in multi family dwellings

**Note:** Sometimes in multiplex buildings the balconies are cantilevered rather than supported by posts. Over time, fatigue or rot can weaken a balcony's structure. Even balconies supported by posts can become weakened by various forces. Balconies should not exhibit noticeable "bounce" when you walk the surface. If you feel movement of the balcony it should be inspected more closely for proper anchorage and structural soundness.

- Common electrical safety and problems areas:
  - a.) missing outlet and switch plate covers.
  - b.) extension cords run through walls or doorways and windows.
  - c.) air conditioners, refrigerators operating on extension cords.
  - d.) light fixtures hanging by the conductors
  - e.) over-fused branch circuits.
  - f.) open junction boxes or wire splices not in a junction box.
  - g.) hanging romex or other wiring not stapled or improperly stapled.
- Smoke detectors and alarms:

There are a number of different scenarios for smoke alarms in houses and apartments. The factors are location, interconnectedness and electrical source. In residences built before approximately 1978 smoke alarms will be battery powered

and will be located on each floor (story) of a building, one in each bedroom, and one in the hallway directly outside the bedroom. In buildings built after the late 1970's you may find a combination of battery and house-powered (hardwired) smoke alarms and some or all of the "hardwired" alarms could be interconnected. The locations will be generally the same as found in the houses or apartments where only battery alarms are found. Wherever smoke alarms are located they should operate when the test button is pressed. If not, the power source should be checked. In some cases the alarm will need to be replaced.

- Other common violations:
  - Plumbing fixtures should be complete with no sharp or broken edges present.
  - Vent fans or windows are required in bathrooms.
  - Kitchen and bathroom counter tops should be continuous and allow the sanitary preparation and serving of food. Excessive cuts, holes, cracks, etc. indicate a surface which must be replaced.
  - All interior surfaces must be maintained in good, clean, and sanitary condition.
  - Heating facilities shall be capable of maintaining a room temperature of 68° F in habitable rooms.
  - All mechanical devices such as fireplaces, cooking appliances, water heating appliances, boilers, shall be properly installed and maintained in a safe working condition.
  - Carpet or flooring that is damaged or a tripping hazard is a violation.
  - City water service, a connection to the city sewer, electrical power and a heat source are required for a house or apartment unit to be habitable.
  - There should not be any broken or cracked windows or any missing screens